

AUTOS JAM ROADS TO FREEDOMLAND

New Park Forced to Stop Ticket Sales in Crush— Beaches Draw Crowds

By GREG MacGREGOR

Radiant sunshine plus gentle breezes added up to a day that drew huge crowds at beaches and amusement parks in the New York area yesterday.

The focus was on Freedomland, the new Bronx amusement park, which was holding its coming out party. The park was jammed with 40,000 early visitors who refused to leave, thus forcing a temporary halt in ticket sales at 2:05 P. M.

The 8,000-car parking lot was jammed to overflowing shortly after noon, and the police blocked off all roads leading from the New England Thruway and Hutchinson River Parkway to the park.

Because early arrivals came prepared to spend the entire day, plans for the opening were upset. The lack of a turnover forced the park to keep the roads closed until 6 P. M. and to schedule the closing for 9 P. M. instead of midnight as a safety precaution. At 9 o'clock the management listed the day's attendance at 61,500.

Crowds Arrive Early

Crowds of patient parents and eager children began to gather outside the new park around 7:30 A. M. to await the 10 o'clock opening. In addition to the 50-cent parking charge, they paid \$1 for each adult admission, 75 cents for children from 12 to 17 and 50 cents for children under 12.

Both Hutchinson River Parkway and the New England Thruway were jammed with cars from 10 A. M. onward, with traffic moving at about three to four miles an hour.

When it became apparent early arrivals were not leaving as expected, the management alerted local radio stations, which broadcast announcements throughout the afternoon warning people away from the area. But despite the warnings, thousands of families kept coming, only to be waved away.

Those with sufficient determination to find parking spaces in neighboring areas were willing to walk several miles to the gates, and at 3 P. M. ticket sales were resumed.

6,000 at Ribbon-Cutting

Singer Pat Boone, with his wife and children, cut the ribbon to open the park officially at 8:30 A. M. About 6,000 persons were allowed inside the park early to attend the ceremony.

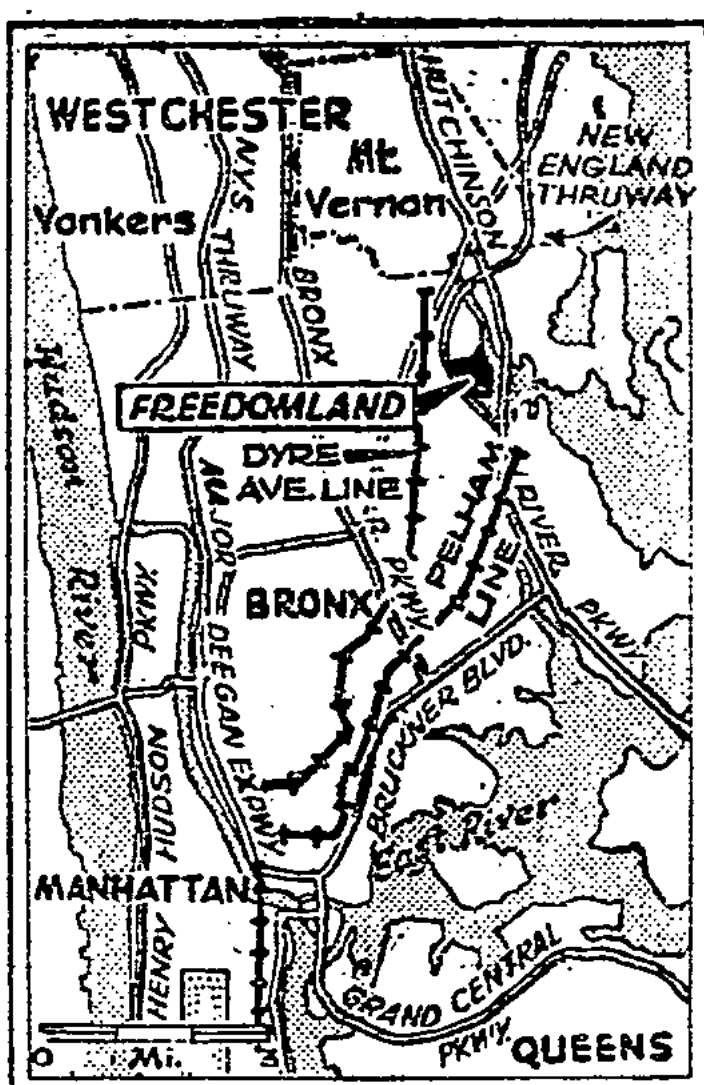
With summer just around the corner—it arrives officially at 5:43 A. M. today—residents of the city and surrounding areas were attracted by the sunshine.

Jones Beach reported 150,000 swimmers and sun bathers, an increase of 40,000 over the attendance on the same day a year ago.

Coney Island reported 750,000 and said the crowd had been expected. The water was rough because of the steady breeze and lifeguards were forced to rescue twenty-three persons.

Rockaway Park listed 375,000 persons. Park officials said the attendance just about matched that of June 5.

But Palisades Amusement Park reported 225,000, which broke all attendance records in the park's sixty-three-year history.



The New York Times June 20, 1960
AREA around Freedomland hit by heavy traffic.